



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of Wisconsin*

517 East Wisconsin Avenue

Milwaukee, WI 53202

PRESS RELEASE

May 7, 2009

De Pere Restaurant Owner Sentenced to 15 Months in Prison for Harboring Illegal Aliens

Acting United States Attorney Michelle L. Jacobs announced that on May 6, 2009, United States District Judge William C. Griesbach sentenced Yu Tian Li, 45, of De Pere, Wisconsin to fifteen (15) months imprisonment for the crime of harboring illegal aliens. The prison sentence is to be followed by two (2) years of supervised release.

In January, following a two-day trial in Green Bay, a jury convicted Li of two counts of harboring aliens for private financial gain and commercial advantage. As part of Li's sentence, Judge Griesbach also imposed a fine of \$10,000 and ordered the forfeiture of the defendant's residence, which was used to facilitate the crime.

Li owned and operated the "China King Buffet" restaurant in DePere. The jury found that during 2008 Li harbored two Chinese nationals in his DePere residence. Evidence was presented to the jury that Li underpaid his workers and failed to report them to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

In sentencing Li, Judge Griesbach focused on the gravity of the offense. The judge observed that the crime was very serious because it involved the victimization of undocumented workers; because it allowed Li to obtain an unfair advantage over law-abiding competitors; and because Li had plainly been motivated by greed. The judge also noted that Li came before the court with some criminal history and had committed the offense while on probation for a state crime.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan H. Koenig. It was investigated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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For additional information contact:

Assistant United State Attorney Jonathan H. Koenig

Public Information Officer Dean Puschnig
(414) 297-1700